

**Report of the Scientific Committee of NAMMCO
1st meeting, Tromsø, Norway, 19-20 January 1993**

1. Opening

The members of the Scientific Committee listed in Appendix I met at its first session 19 January 1993 14.45-15.00, were greeted by the convenor, Jóhann Sigurjónsson, and dealt with items 1-5 of the agenda. A second and third session were held 20 January 10.00-11.45 and 12.15-12.30, when items 6-7 were discussed.

2. Appointment of Rapporteur

Finn Kapel was appointed rapporteur of the meeting.

3. Election of Chairman and Vice-chairman

Jóhann Sigurjónsson was elected Chairman, and Tore Haug Vice-chairman, by consensus.

4. Adoption of Agenda

The agenda shown as Appendix II was adopted.

5. List of Species

It was agreed that any comments or corrections to the list of priority species of pinnipeds and cetaceans prepared for this meeting, with the addition of a section on Bottlenose dolphin, Tursiops truncatus (to be prepared by Dorete Bloch), should be forwarded to the Chairman no later than 15 March by the members of the Scientific Committee, having consulted the relevant national specialists on each species. It was further agreed that this list should constitute a reference list which would be updated as new information becomes available, but not an exhaustive account of the status of all stocks.

6. Priority Tasks and Establishment of Working Groups

The Management Committee of NAMMCO had recommended that the Scientific Committee be asked to provide advice on the following priority species and tasks (the exact wording of these requests were not available at the time of discussion in the Scientific Committee):

6.1. North Atlantic Long-Finned Pilot Whale (Globicephala melas)

The Scientific Committee noted that a request from NAMMCO had already been forwarded to ICES, that had replied that the matter would be dealt with by the ICES Study Group on Long-Finned Pilot Whales at a meeting in Copenhagen 30 August to 3 September 1993. Under these circumstances the Scientific Committee saw no reason to establish a special NAMMCO working group on this species but would base its advice on the findings of the above-mentioned ICES Study Group.

6.2. Northern Bottlenose Whale (Hyperoodon ampullatus) and Killer Whale (Orcinus orca)

The Scientific Committee recommends establishing a joint working group to assess the status of these two species, and charged its Chairman to find a candidate for chairing this working group, and in consultation with that person develop its terms of reference, membership and time schedule. This could then be approved by the Scientific Committee by correspondence.

6.3. Harp and Hooded Seals (Phoca groenlandica and Cystophora cristata)

The Scientific Committee saw no reason to establish a special NAMMCO working group on these species, but recommends that requests be forwarded to ICES and/or NAFO to be treated by the Joint ICES/NAFO Working Group on Harp and Hooded Seals, that has the mandate and potential for assessing and giving management advice on all stocks of harp and hooded seals. The Scientific Committee was informed that the next meeting of the Joint Working Group had not yet been formally scheduled, but that its members had agreed that a suitable time and place for such a meeting would be 1-7 October 1993 in Copenhagen.

6.4. Atlantic Walrus (Odobenus rosmarus rosmarus)

The Scientific Committee was aware that a meeting of the Walrus International Technical and Scientific Committee (WITS) had just been held in Winnipeg (11-15 January 1993). It was felt that more information on the work of this group was needed to evaluate whether NAMMCO in future could draw upon the expertise of this committee for evaluating the status of walrus stocks and consider the need for management options. It was agreed that Finn Kapel should attempt to collect copies of meeting reports and other information about WITS, and distribute this material to other members of the Scientific Committee as soon as possible.

6.5. The Ecological Role of Marine Mammals

The predecessor of NAMMCO, NAC, had forwarded requests for advice from ICES on the current state of knowledge on the interrelations between marine mammals and fish and shrimp stocks, and the use of multispecies models in that connection. These requests were carried over by NAMMCO at its inaugural meeting in September 1992. ICES General Secretary has referred to these requests in his letter of 15 October 1992 by writing: "The requests dealing with multispecies matters will probably be considered to the extent and when possible by existing Working or Study Groups".

The Scientific Committee noted that questions relating to interactions were included in the terms of reference of the Study Group on Long-Finned Pilot Whale as well as the Joint Working Group on Harp and Hooded Seals. It was aware of a number of on-going studies on the feeding and consumption by these and other species, and of efforts to include such data in multispecies models.

It is hard to find an example of a study that has described the ecological role of a single species of marine mammal satisfactorily. It is, clearly, even more difficult when more species are involved. Due to the complexity of the issues, and because other high priority tasks were identified, the Scientific Committee could not recommend that a special working group on ecological relations be established within the NAMMCO framework at this stage, but the work being done within ICES and elsewhere should be followed closely, and the Committee decided to have the matter on its agenda for continued consideration.

6.6. Management Procedures

The Management Committee had recommended the establishment of a working group on management procedures, consisting of specialists in areas such as population dynamics and management models, as well as biologists with relevant knowledge of the species in question.

The Scientific Committee discussed this recommendation at some length, but was unable to reach a consensus within the limited time available at this meeting. It was agreed that it was important to establish a special working group on this matter as soon as possible, but some members felt that these issues were not exclusively of scientific nature, and that such a working group, therefore, from the outset should include representation of the managers, e.g. in order to secure a debate of the management principles or objectives which should form the basis for formulating management procedures.

For these reasons the Scientific Committee was also unable at this stage to make a suggestion for a person to chair this working group. It was agreed that the Chairman should consult with the Chairman of the Commission to develop further guidelines concerning the tasks, terms of reference, and composition of such a working group on management procedures, and attempt to reach an agreement concerning the chairperson, membership and time schedule.

7. Time Table and Working Procedure

The Scientific Committee had faced difficulties in giving the items referred to it an adequate treatment at this meeting. It was felt that at least one full day ahead of the next Commission Meeting was needed for the Scientific Committee to fulfill its tasks, even if all relevant material will be distributed prior to the meeting. When working group reports or other major issues will be tabled in future, more than one day will evidently be necessary.

Concerning the timing of meetings the Scientific Committee noted that the next meeting of the Commission was tentatively scheduled to be held in Reykjavik in mid-June 1993. Several members pointed out that this might make it difficult for them to attend because of field activities; in fact, the entire period between late May and late August is generally inconvenient for future meetings due to possible collision with plans for field work, other meetings (e.g. IWC) and/or holidays.

The Committee discussed briefly the need for annual national progress reports and the formal status of documents presented and discussed at future meetings. It was agreed that the annual Reports of Activities presented to ICES would be a convenient format to reflect national research activities sufficiently. Further, it was noted that a standardized book keeping system for Scientific Committee documents was needed at first convenience.

It was agreed that the report of this first Scientific Committee meeting should be adopted by correspondance. This procedure was terminated 9 February 1993.

**Scientific Committee Members present at the 1st Meeting
Tromsø, Norway, 19-20 January 1993**

Arnoldus Schytte Blix, Norway

Dorete Bloch, Faroe Islands

Tore Haug, Norway

Finn O. Kapel, Greenland

Jóhann Sigurjónsson, Iceland (convenor)

Gisli A. Vikingsson, Iceland

AGENDA

Scientific Committee of NAMMCO

1st meeting, Tromsø, Norway

19-20 January 1993

1. OPENING/WELCOME
2. APPOINTMENT OF RAPPORTEUR
3. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN
4. ADOPTION OF AGENDA
5. LIST OF SPECIES
6. PRIORITY TASKS AND ESTABLISHMENT OF WORKING GROUPS
7. TIME TABLE AND WORKING PROCEDURE

North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission

SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

FAROE ISLANDS:

Ms. Dorete Bloch
Dr. Genevieve Desportes
Dr. Bogi Hansen

GREENLAND:

Mr. Mads-Peter Heide-Jørgensen → *Greenland fisheries?*
Mr. Finn O. Kapel
Mr. Finn Larsen

ICELAND:

Mr. Thorvaldur Gunnlaugsson → *Haftramsóma?*
Mr. Johann Sigurjonsson
Mr. Gisli Vikingsson

NORWAY:

Dr. Arnoldus Schytte Blix ~
Dr. Tore Haug ~
Dr. Nils Øien ~